

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 PA-01
CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 HA-05 SNM-05
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FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3847
AMEMBASSY RANGOON

S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 BANGKOK 12424

FOLLOWING TEL SENT BANGKOK FROM CHIANG MIA 28 APR 78 REPEATED
FYI:

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S E C R E T SECTION 1 OF 2 CHIANG MAI 156

WARNING NOTICE--SENSITIVE INTELLIGENCE METHODS AND SOURCES
INVOLVED.

E.O.11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: SNAR, BM, TH
SUBJECT: BURMESE ACTION AGAINST TRAFFICKERS/DISSIDENT GROUPS IN THE
DOI LANG AREA

SUMMARY: THE FOLLOWING DESCRIPTION OF THE RECENT BURMESE
ACTION IN THE DOI LANG AREA IS COMPILED FROM A VARIETY OF
CONSULATE SOURCES INCLUDING SOME WITH CONTACTS WITHIN THE
DIFFERENT BURMESE DISSIDENT ORGANIZATIONS. WE HAVE NO WAY
OF VERIFYING MUCH OF THE INFORMATION. HOWEVER, SOME OF IT
DOES FIT WITHIN PARAMETERS OF THE INTELLIGENCE REPORTING CUR-
RENTLY AVAILABLE ON THE OPERATION. WE BELIEVE THE INFORMA-
TION IS WORTH REPEATING IN THAT IT GIVES SOME OF THE FLAVOR
OF THE REPORTS CIRCULATING AMONG THAI CIVILIAN AND MILITARY
OFFICIALS IN THE CHIANG MAI AND NORTHERN CHIANG MAI AREA.

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END SUMMARY.

1. OUR SOURCES REPORTED THAT THE BURMESE ACTION WAS CARRIED
OUT BY SPECIAL FORCE 77/88 UNDER THE COMMAND OF LT.COL. KYAN
HLA TU. THE FORCE STAGED OUT OF THE TOWN OF MONG SAT AND
MOVED INTO THE DOI LANG AREA BY FOOT USING LOCALLY
RECRUITED PORTERS. MINORITY GROUPS IN THE AREA ATTACKED

INCLUDE THE LAHU NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMY UNDER THE COMMAND OF CHA U, THE SHAN STATE REVOLUTIONARY ARMY UNDER THE NOMINAL COMMAND OF LO HSIN MING (IN FACT THE SHAN STATE REVOLUTIONARY ARMY HAS BECOME A FRONT ORGANIZATION OF THE FIFTH CIF), THE KACHIN INDEPENDENCE ARMY UNDER LT. SAW GAUNG, AND MEMBERS OF THE KOKANG RESISTANCE ARMY.

2. RUMORS OF AN IMPENDING ATTACK HAD BEEN CIRCULATING AMONG ALL OF THESE GROUPS FOR SOME TIME PRIOR TO THE ACTUAL ATTACK. IN FACT, IT MAY WELL HAVE REACHED A POINT WHERE THE REPORTS OF AN IMPENDING ATTACK HAD BEEN HEARD SO OFTEN THAT WHEN THE ATTACK FINALLY CAME SOME OF THE TRAFFICKERS DISCOUNTED THE NEW REPORTS AND FAILED TO MOVE AS QUICKLY AS MIGHT HAVE BEEN EXPECTED. EVEN SO, ONCE THE BURMESE BEGAN THE FIRST ATTACK AGAINST A DISSIDENT POSITION, ALL DISSIDENT FORCES QUICKLY EVACUATED THE AREA AND MOST MANAGED TO AVOID ANY ARMED CLASHES EXCEPT FOR SNIPER FIRE AS THEY RETREATED.

3. THE ATTACKS STARTED WITH A THREE-PRONGED MOVE AGAINST THE DOI LANG AREA. IN MOST CASES THE BURMESE DISCOVERED ONLY DESERTED CAMPS OR ABANDONED REFINERIES. MORTAR FIRE WAS ALSO USED AND ON ONE OCCASION FOUR SHELLS FELL ON THE THAI VILLAGE OF PANG TON DUEN. IN THAT SHELLING SEVERAL HOUSES WERE DAMAGED AND ONE VILLAGER WAS WOUNDED. (INTELLIGENCE REPORTS SECRET

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CONFIRM THAT SUCH AN ATTACK DID HAPPEN, APPARENTLY BECAUSE OF A MISUNDERSTANDING BY BURMESE TROOPS WHO THOUGHT THAT SOLDIERS THEY HAD OBSERVED WERE MEMBERS OF THE SSRA UNIT. IN FACT, THE SOLDIERS WERE LOCAL BBP FORCES.)

4. ON APRIL 15 THAI BORDER PATROL POLICE COL. TAWON KONGPTRAYUUN AND THE MAE AE DISTRICT OFFICER SARAN SIRICHOTE PLUS A PARTY OF FIFTY MEN WENT UP TO THE DOI LANG AREA MET WITH THE BURMESE TROOPS, AND TOLD THEM THAT THEY HAD CROSSED INTO THAI SOIL. THE BURMESE TROOPS ADMITTED THAT THEY HAD INADVERTENTLY DONE SO AND REQUESTED THAT THE THAI AUTHORITIES CAPTURE AND TURN OVER TO THE BURMESE BOTH CHA U OF THE LNA AND LO HSIN MING OF THE SSRA. THAI AUTHORITIES CLAIMED TO HAVE NO KNOWLEDGE OF THE WHEREABOUTS OF EITHER MEN, NOR OF ANY OF THE DISSIDENTS WHO HAD FLED INTO THAILAND.

5. ON APRIL 20 TWO BURMESE PRIVATES, IN UNIFORM AND ARMED, WERE ARRESTED IN MAE AE DISTRICT INSIDE OF THAILAND. BOTH WERE DETAINED AT THE MAE AE POLICE STATION. BOTH STATED THAT THEY BELONGED TO THE SECOND COMPANY OF THE FOURTEENTH BATTALION OF SPECIAL FORCE 88.

POL.COL. SURAPON SINGHAPLIN, THE DEPUTY COMMANDER OF PROVINCIAL POLICE AREA 7, WENT TO MAE AE TO MAKE AN INVESTIAGTION. ON APRIL 22 THE GOVERNOR OF CHIANG MAI, THE VICE-GOVERNOR, AND COL. SURAPON, PLUS A LARGE PARTY INCWUDING REPORTERS, VISITED THE AREA AND MET WITH A COMPANY BF BURMESE SPECIAL FORCES UNDER THE COMMAND OF LT. COL/ KYAN HLATU. THE MEETING REPORTEDLYNTOOK PLACE INSCDE BURMA. THE BURMESE COLOMEL REQUESTED THE RELEASE OF THE TWO BURMESE SOLDIERS. THE GOVERNOR EXPLAINED THAT THE TWO SOLDIERS WOULD HAVE TO BE FURTHER INTERROGATED IN ACCORDANCS WITH THAI LAW. LOCAL THAI NEWSPAPERS GAVE CONSIDERABLE PLAY TO THE MEETING BETWEEN THE GOVERNOR AND THE BURMESE FORCES, INCLUDING PICTURES. THE CHIANG MAI PRESS REPORTED THE MEETING AS A FRIENDLY
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INTERCHANGE. ON APRIL 23 THE TWO SOLDIERS WERE RELEASED AND TURNED OVER TO THE BURMESE COMPANY 77/88 AT DOI LANG.

6. CONSULATE SOURCES CLAIM THAT ABOUT 600 BURMESE SOLDIERS HAD BEEN INVOLVED IN THE OPERATION, AND THAT OVER 1,000 PORTERS WERE RECRUITED TO CARRY SUPPLIES ON THE MARCH INTO THE DOI LANG AREA. THE DISSIDENT GROUPS ARE CLAIMING THAT THEY INFLICTED SIGNIFICANT CASUALTIES ON THE BURMESE TROOPS PRIOR TO THEIR RETREAT, AND THAT THEY ARE CONTINUING SNIPING ATTACKS. THE ESTIMATES OF CASUALTIES RANGE UP TO AS HIGH AS THIRTY-SEVEN BURMESE KILLED. ONE REPORT CLAIMS THAT ON APRIL 23 LNA MEN UNDER CHA U AMBUSED BURMESE SOLDIERS AT ONE OF THE CAPTURED CAMP SITES AND KILLED AND WOUNDED SEVERAL OF THEM. LOCAL DISSIDENT GROUPS CLAIM THAT THE BURMESE ARE HAVING PROBLEMS WITH PORTERS RECRUITED FOR

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ACTION EA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 PM-05 NSC-05 SP-02 SS-15 PA-01
CIAE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 DODE-00 HA-05 SNM-05
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R 290627Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3848
AMEMBASSY RANGOON

S E C R E T SECTION 2 OF 2 BANGKOK 12424

WARNING NOTICE-7SENFITIVE INTELLIGENCE METHODS AND SOURCES
INVOLVED.

E.O.11652: XGDS-2
TAGS: SNAR, BM, TH
SUBJECT: BURMESE ACTION AGAINST TRAFFICKERS/DISSIDENT GROUPS IN
THE DOI LANG AREA

THE OPERATION AND THAT LARGE NUMBERS HAVE ALREADY DE-
SETEED, "LEAVING THE BURMESE TROOPS STRANDED IN THE DOI
LANG AREA FACING SERIOUS PROBLEMS OF RESUPPLY." DISSI-
DENT GROUPS ARE ALSO CLAIMING THAT BURMESE TROOPS MURDERED
SOME OF THE PORTERS TRYING TO DESERT.

7. MUCH IN THESE REPORTS CIRCULATING INSIDE THAILAND
ARE UNDOUBTEDLY CONTRADICTED BY REPORTS OF THE ACTION
FROM BURMESE SOURCES. THE CLAIMS OF CASUALTIES IN-
FLICTED UPON BURMESE TROOPS ARE ESPECIALLY SUSPECT. STILL
THE REPORTS ARE INTERESTING IN THAT MOST OF THE THAI
CIVILIAN AND MILITARY OFFICIALS IN THIS AREA WILL HAVE
HEARD SUCH RUMORS OF THE ACTION.

8. THROUGHOUT THE BURMESE OPERATIONS IN THE DOI LANG
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AREA, THE THAI GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS HAVE APPEARED TO BE
TRYING VERY HARD TO TAKE A PUBLIC STANCE OF COOPERATION
AND SUPPORT TOQARDS THE BURMESE ACTION AGAINST THE TRAF-
FICKING GROUPS. THE THAI ACCEPTED WITH GOOD GRACE THE
ACCIDENTAL INCURSIONS INTO THAILAND, AND THE MEETINGS
BETWEEN THAI AND BURMESE OFFICIALS DURING THE COURSE
OF THE OPERATION HAVE ZEEN GIVEN CONSIDERABLE COVERAGE
IN THE LOCAL PRESS. SUCH PRESS STORIES, ACCOMPANIED BY PIC-
TURES OF A SMILING CHIANG MAI GOVERNOR AND THE BUR-
MESE COMMANDER, HAVE PLAYED UP THE FRIENDLY COOPERA-
TIVE DISCUSSIONS ACROSS THE BORDER.

9. ON APRIL 24, THE GOVERNOR SUMMONED REPRESENTATIVES
OF THE MINORITY GROUPS CURRENTLY LOCATED INSIDE THAILAND
AND AGAIN REPEATED THE RTG ORDERS THAT ALL ARMED GROUPS
MOVE OUT OF THAILAND BY 20 AT THE LATEST.

10. THE REPORTS LISTING THE DISSIDENT GROUPS ATTACKED IN THE DOI LANG AREA ARE GENERLLY ACCURATE. THE AREA HAS HAD A MIXED COLLECTION OF SOME OF THE SMALLER TRAFFICKING ORGANIZATIONS WITH THE SSRA/FIFTH CIF PROBABLY BEING THE MOST IMPORTANT. THE DOI LANG AREA IS A RELATIVELY NEW AREA FOR HEROIN PRODUCTION. MOST OF THESE SMALLER TRAFFICKING GROUPS MOVED INTO THE AREA FROM OTHER BORDER AREAS, IN PART ASSA RESULT OF PRE-SURE FROM AN EXPANDING SHAN UNITED ARMY. THE DOI LANG AREA THEN IS THE ONLY MAJOR REFINERY AREA ALONG THE BORDER WHERE THERE IS NO SHAN UNITED ARMY PRESENCE. TANNER UNQTE
WHITEHOUSE

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